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amnesty international

SOUTHEAST ASIA

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN BRUNEI, INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE AND THAILAND

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Amnesty International's concerns include the detention of prisoners including prisoners of conscience after possibly unfair trials and the continued imposition of the death penalty. Cases of torture and extrajudicial executions were reported from East Timor and Irian Jaya.

Eighteen prisoners of conscience are currently detained in Indonesia including Muslim activists; leaders of what has been termed the "moderate opposition" such as General Hartono Rekso Dharsono; and some of those arrested in connection with an attempted coup in 1965. Amnesty International believes that many others, including about two dozen men associated with a Muslim study group called Usroh, may be prisoners of conscience, but its information was insufficent to determine whether any had advocated violence.

In Irian Jaya, Amnesty International continues to seek information about five extrajudicial executions reported in 1986 and to press for investigations into reports of torture. Information about alleged human rights violations in Irian Jaya is difficult to verify given limited access to the province and restrictions of press freedom in Indonesia more generally. Amnesty International had been concerned about the fate of 12 refugees from Irian Jaya deported in October 1985 from Papua New Guinea and arrested immediately upon their arrival in Jayapura. By the end of 1987, all had been tried and all but one had been released after having served their prison terms.

Amnesty International continues to be concerned about reports of torture from East Timor. Two prisoners, Aleixo Gutteres and Vicente de Sousa were reportedly tortured in late 1986 and early 1987 during interrogation in Dili in a house occupied by military intelligence, KOTIS. Amnesty International is still trying to gather information about two extrajudicial executions reported in 1986 but restrictions on access to the territory, strict press controls and monitoring of postal and telephone communications make gathering such information difficult. More than 40 political prisoners were released in Dili East Timor in August and October after having served all but a few months of their sentences.

Use of the death penalty in Indonesia has sharply increased in recent years, with 17 judicial executions since the beginning of 1985; in the previous 10 years there were four. On 31 October, two men convicted of murder, Liong Wie Tong and Tan Tiang Tjoen were executed in Karawang, West Java after having been sentenced to death more than 25 years earlier. About 30 people remained under sentence of death.